

# The Motif of the Angels' Fall in Early Judaism

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## 1. Introduction: Definitions and Method

The terms “angels’ fall” and “fallen angels” originate with the dogmatic tradition of Christianity which talks about “fallen” or “evil” angels in the context of the locus of the primeval fall of Satan. According to this Satan once was a superior angel who, joined by other angels, turned from good to evil of his own free will in primeval times and for that reason fell down from heaven<sup>1</sup>. This locus is based on early church tradition: already the apologists mentioned Satan’s fall and often his angels’ fall as well<sup>2</sup>. Especially in the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> centuries AD numerous narratives dealing with this subject were in circulation<sup>3</sup>, not least the tradition originating from the Jewish Vita Adae et Evaе, saying that Satan and his angels fell from heaven because they refused to perform proskynesis before Adam. Nearly canonical – and displacing other traditions – is the version found for the first time in Origenes, *De principiis I 5, 2-5*; it identifies the Satan with the “morning star” (*ἔωσφόρος, lucifer*) which has fallen down from heaven according to Isa 14:12ff. and interprets in addition the oracle concerning the King of Tyre in Ezek 28 as indicating a primeval fall of an angel<sup>4</sup>. These two texts are also found in Isidor, Petrus Lombardus and Thomas Aquinus; in addition espe-

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1 Cf. Isidor, *Liber Sententiarum* 1,10,5-12 (MPL 83,554-556); Petrus Lombardus, *Liber Sententiarum* 2,6 (MPL 192,662-664); Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, qu 63 (BAC 77,435-47); Hutter, *Compendium Locorum Theologicorum* 5,10-18; Calixt, *Epitome Theologiae* p. 56-58; Gerhard, *Loci Theologici* 2,5,10-12; Hollaz, *Examen Theologiae Acromaticum* 1,4,20ff.

Editions: Trillhaas, Leonhard Hutter 23-24; Mager, Calixt II 150-153; Preuss, Johannis Gerhardi Loci II, 10-11; Hollaz, Examen I, 583f.

2 Justinus, *Dialogus cum Tryphone* 103,5; 124,3; Tatianus, *Oratio ad Graecos* 7; Athenagoras, *Supplicatio* 24-26). Concerning the apologists cf. Goodspeed, *Apologeten*. 219, 244-245, 273-274, 343-347.

3 For material concerning early church traditions on Satan’s fall cf. Bamberger, *Angels* 73-86, 272-274.

4 For Origenes, *De Principiis* 1,5,2-5 cf. Koetschau, *Origenes* 70-78.

cially John 8:44; 2Petr 2:4; Jude 6 are used in dogmatic tradition. The protestant theologians mentioned above (cf. note 1) do not refer to Isa 14:12ff. and Ezek 28; the only exception is Calixt, at the same time traditionalist and headstrong; he remarks that Isa 14 and Ezek 28 allegorically refer to Satan's fall<sup>5</sup>.

The present article aims at presenting early Jewish traditions which correspond or are similar to the Christian tradition just roughly described. This project implies a methodical problem: There is a risk to subsume phenomena under a category to which they do not belong – neither in an objective nor in an historical-genetical sense. This does not so much apply to narratives of a fall of Satan – and his angels – in primeval times, which actually existed also in early Judaism, though they are not as widely attested as in Christianity. However, this risk becomes imminent when we turn to the so called tradition of the watcher-angels; according to this before the Deluge a group of angels married human women against God's will, begot the giants and disclosed heavenly secrets; in the sources they are called "watchers" after the Aramaic term designating angels (נְצָרִים ["watching ones reflections"], Greek ἑγρήγοροι, Old Ethiopic *teguhān*) of this tradition in the New Testament (2Petr 2:4, Judg 6) have been associated in dogmatic tradition with the locus of the fallen angels viz. Satan's fall respectively.

There is a temptation to associate the Watchers' tradition at once with the myth of Satan's fall, or to define it as a variation of a more extensive category, an early Jewish mythology of the angels' fall, for instance. However, this would comprehend the religion-historical fact rather imprecisely: the Watchers concerning the term "fall of angels" is hardly ever used, much less still a fall of Satan is mentioned. At the same time the myth of the Watchers doubtless has some analogies to the idea of Satan's fall. Both share an important trait, namely: angels do something not complying with God's will and are punished for this. No one will be surprised that Satan's fall and the tradition of the Watchers were associated with one another, at least secondarily so (cf. Athenagoras, *Supplicatio* 24). Therefore, we will have to take the tradition of the Watchers into account here. Of course, we will have to take heed to remember that it is originally something else than the idea of a fall of angels. The latter is realized in the traditions of a primeval fall of Satan, which, as we have already indicated, also existed in Judaism and which will be the focus of our interest.

We will proceed as follows: First the tradition of the Watchers is described. Special attention will be paid to its relation with satanology

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5 Mager, Calixt 151.

(ch. 2). Then we will deal with the main subject, the traditions of the Satanic fall in early Judaism. After an introduction (ch. 3.1) and after considering some rather vague testimonies (ch. 3.2), two – reception-historically influential – central passages will be discussed, an earlier one taken from the *Vita Adae et Evae* (ch. 3.3) and – not as detailed – a rather late one from *Pirqê de Rabbi Eliézer* (ch. 3.4). It remains to say that only early Judaism (ch. 3) will be the subject of our investigation. Nevertheless Christian testimonies will play a significant role as well. This shows the affinity of the two religious milieus especially in this field; but it also is somehow connected with the fact that Christians adopted the traditions of early Judaism more readily than the rabbis. Numerous Christian testimonies are only secondarily Christian, i.e. they are derived from originally Jewish writings with a Christian superstratum.

## 2. The Tradition of the Watchers

The tradition of the Watchers' marriages is very old. Its Biblical point of reference is in Gen 6:2-4. It is attested in nearly all the books of the Enoch-Pentateuch (1 En) with the exception of the astronomic book of Enoch (1En 72-82)<sup>6</sup>; The tradition is also reflected in the Book of Giants<sup>7</sup> as well as in Jubilees<sup>8</sup> and later Jewish writings; besides there is evidence of a Christian reception of the myth<sup>9</sup>.

In spite of the popularity which the myth of the Watchers enjoyed in late Jewish-Christian antiquity, it lost its attractiveness since the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, because an anthropological interpretation of the "sons of

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6 Cf. 1En 12-16; 19:1-3; 39:1-2; 54-55; 64; 67-69, especially 69:-14; 86-88; 106:13-17. For 1En cf. Uhlig, *Henochbuch*, also dealing with problems of introduction.

7 Fragments in Qumran: IQ 23.24; 2Q 26; 4Q 203.204[?]; 4Q 530-533; 6Q 8. For the Qumran texts cf. Garcia Martinez / E J. Tigchelaar, *Dead Sea*.

8 Cf. Lib Jub 4:15, 22; 5 lff; 7:21-25; 8:3; 10:5; 20:5); cf. also Dam Doc 2:18; Josephus, Ant 1:73; Ps-Philo, *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* 34 (insecure); 2 Bar 56:10-16; probably of Jewish origin also are 2En 7; 18; Test Rub 5:6-7; Test Naph 3:5; for Jubilees Vanderkam, *Book (Ethiopic text; the appendix offers parallel traditions in other languages)* and Littmann, *Buch* 31-119. For DamDoc 2:18 cf. Lohse, *Texte* 70-71; cf. also Niese , Flavii Iosephi I,17; Harrington / Cazeaux, *Pseudo-Philon* 256-259; Ryssel, *Ba-ruchapokalypse* 402-466, especially 434; Bötttrich, *Henochbuch* 875-880; de Jonge, *Testaments* 10, 117.

9 Cf. e. g. Jude 6; 2Petr 2:4; Papias, frag. 12 (insecure); Justin, *Apologia* 5; Justin, *Appendix* 5; Athenagoras, *Supplicatio* 24-26; Euseb, *Praeparatio Evangelica* V 4:9-10; Tertullian, *De Oratione* 22:5-6 (CCSL 1,270), *De Cultu Femininarum* 1:2 (CCSL 1,344-346), *De Virginibus Velandis* 7 (CCSL 2,1216-1217); Commodianus, *Instructiones* 1:3 (CCSL 128,4); Sulpicius Severus, *Chronica* 1,2,7-8 (CSEL 1,4-5). Editions: Körtner, *Papiaspfragmente* 64; Goodspeed, *Apologeten* 29, 82, 343-347, and Mras, *Eusebius Werke* VIII,1 229.

God" in Gen 6:2 became dominant. On the Jewish side Symmachus testifies to it, who translates as *beni אלֹהִים* as *οἱ γιοὶ τῶν θεῶν* δυναστεύοντων; the Septuagint still had *οἱ γιοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ* (with the widely attested variant *οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ*)<sup>10</sup>. Berešît Rabbâ 26:5 shows the same hermeneutical strategy when Rabbi Šim'ôn ben Jôhaj renders the respective phrase as *beni רַבִּין* ("sons of the judges") and curses anyone who translates it as *beni אלהִים* ("sons of the gods")<sup>11</sup>. On the Christian side the interpretation of Gen 6:2-4 as referring to the Watchers is increasingly suppressed by the idea that the "sons of God" refer to the Sethites, who were fascinated by Cain's female offspring and because of this departed from the right path. This reading is found for the first time in Julius Africanus<sup>12</sup>.

Its manifold applicability explains the enormously broad circulation of the Watchers' myth. So one might learn from it something about the dangers of female charms; in 1En 19:2 women are already presented as those who actually took the initiative in marrying the angels (they seduced the angels; cf. Test Rub 5:6-7). Another motif that guaranteed interest in this myth was the fact that it gave an account of the disclosure of heavenly secrets (cf. esp. 1En 6-11): the Watchers have conveyed numerous skills to men, especially in the fields of astrology, magic, medicine, cosmetics, metallurgy, and military affairs – all of which were to a wide extent considered as achievements of civilization in contemporary pagan sources<sup>13</sup>. In the context of the Watchers' tradition they are unmistakably evaluated unfavourably. Thus the myth includes an aspect of criticizing civilization. Further, it probably functions as a parody of the contemporary Πρώτος εὐρετής-discourse, which traced back achievements of civilization to figures of mythic tradition – be it the Greek one or that of oriental nations – and thus expressed the claims on ethnic-religious weight<sup>14</sup>.

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10 For the Septuagint and the other Greek translations cf. Wevers, Genesis 108.

11 Cf. Aquila: *οἱ γιοὶ τῶν θεῶν*. For Ber R 26,5 cf. Theodor / Albeck, Bereshit I, 247.

12 Chronographia, frag 2 (MPG 10,65); this view is held lateron by Cyril (Glaphyra ad Genesim 2) and Augustinus (De Civitate Dei XV,22-23; XVIII,38), for instance; a prominent witness also is the so called Caverna Thesaurorum (*ibidem* 11), a retelling of the Bible written in late antiquity in the Syriac church. Cf. Ri, Caverne 80ff (text) and Bezold, Schatzhöhle 14ff. (trans.). For an introduction cf. Stone, History 90-95.

13 An example is the Phoenician History by Philo of Byblos, which, after a cosmogony, offers a primeval history of civilization, in which figures from Phoenician mythology – for the most part appearing under the names of Greek deities – are the protagonists (Philo Byblius apud Eusebius, Praeparatio Evangelica I 10,6ff.).

14 As an example for the Πρώτος εὐρετής-Discourse cf. Philo Byblius (cf. note 13). For the endeavour of Greek and Hellenistic-Oriental historiographers to form the beginning of civilization from an ethnic perspective by having recourse to the historically interpreted mythic tradition of their own people cf. the short survey in Oden, Philo 118-124. It is also reflected in Jewish historians like Artapanus und Eupolemus. For

However, the fact that the Watchers' myth could be connected with knowledge of the origin of demons seems to be most important: According to 1En 15:8-12 demons are the spirits of the giants who were destroyed through the Deluge; already in 1En 19:1 it is these demons who cause idolatry. In the context of a demonological explanation of pagan cults the Watchers' myth will be used afterwards time and again (cf. e.g. Justinus, *Apologia* 5 etc.). At the latest with this demonological outlook the myth touches a subject that is very closely connected with the concept of Satan's fall, namely the etiology of evil. Under the conditions of a demonological interpretation of reality, as it prevails in early Judaism and early Christianity, information about the origin of demons is also to a large extent information about the derivation of anything which appears to be morally and practically adversative in life.

Although the possibility to provide an etiology of evil offers an important point in relation with the tradition of Satan's fall, the differences between the tradition-complexes cannot be overlooked. This may be seen already when considering a linguistic specialty which is not a minor detail in the present context. The Watchers' tradition comparatively seldom says that the angels "fall" or "have fallen". Exceptions like DamDoc 2:17-18 where it says about the "Watchers of heaven" (עררי השמיים) that they "have fallen" (נפלו) "because of their conduct in hard-heartedness" (בלכתחם בשרירות לבם) confirm this rule. All the more so narratives about Satan's fall talk about falling viz. fallen angels, especially with regard to Satan. Deviating from DamDoc 2:18 this concerns very often not only falling in a figurative sense, but in a concretely spatial sense (cf. e.g. VitAd 11-17), so that the term "angels' fall" viz. "Satan's fall" may be taken so to speak as an original language (ethic) term as long as one does not transfer it to texts of the Watchers' tradition by mistake.

The reason for this linguistic difference would be a second aspect which distinguishes the traditions of the Watchers and of Satan's fall even more effectively: For the present the Watchers – in contrast with Satan and his angels – are irrelevant, at least as long as they themselves are concerned and not the consequences of their evil-doings. They were active at the time before the Deluge and they were punished; therefore they could be important as a paradigm of divine punishing activity (cf. Jude 6). But just because of this they are no longer an actual threat for whose origin one needs to look. Completely different things are with Satan and his angels, to whom one felt exposed in the present. Correspondingly the problem of their identity was actually obvious, and the

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the relationship of the Watchers' myth with this discourse cf. Hanson, *Rebellion* 195-233.

idea of a primeval fall of angels, when Satan and his angels became what they are, could function as a model of explanation, though only from a certain time onwards (cf. ch. 3). Correspondingly the ideas of Satan's fall and the Watchers' myth are distinguished from one another basically in their subject-rhema-structure insofar as the angelic nature of the protagonists is concerned. Within the tradition of Satan's fall the (primeval) angelic nature is the new message; Satan in his evilness is the subject, his angelic nature the rhema. The other way round it stands with the Watchers' tradition: one knows that they are angels, but what they do comes as a surprise.

The fact that the Watchers' myth originally has nothing to do with the satanological tradition, tradition-historically corresponds to the distance between the Watchers' myth and the idea of Satan's fall. One will look for any allusion to Satan in the earlier texts about the Watchers in vain. In Jubilees, too, both ideas stand one beside the other nearly unconnected. After all Mastema functions there as the leader of evil spirits which are thought to originate with the Watchers' marriages (10:5). But in a relationship with the Watchers themselves he does not appear; and we do not learn anything about his own origin. Mastema in Jubilees, a very active Satanic figure, plays a role only after the Deluge, when the Watchers had already been punished.

In vain, correspondingly, one will look for influences exerted by the Watchers' tradition in the earlier satanology. This is true, of course, for passages in the Old Testament (Job 1-2; Zech 3:1; 1Chr 21:1), but as well for the doctrine of two spirits found in Qumran (cf. 1Q S III:13-IV:26); its "angel of darkness" (**מַלְאָךְ חֹשֶׁךְ**) might belong to satanological tradition, cf. the phrase "rule of his adversity" (**מִמְשָׁלָת מִשְׁטָמָתוֹ**) in the context of his activities directed against the sons of justice, a phrase recalling the Satanic name Mastema (1 Q S III:23). The same negative answer is to be given for the most part of the texts dealing with Satan's fall: Again one will look for verifiable references to the Watchers' myth in vain. Only in Athenagoras, *Supplicatio* 24ff. (Goodspeed, 343ff.) a concept of Satan's fall and the Watchers' tradition appear connected to one another.

### 3. The Traditions of Satan's Fall viz. of Satan as a Fallen Angel in Early Judaism

#### 3.1. Introduction: On the relation between Jewish and Christian Traditions

As compared to the tradition of the Watchers the idea of Satan's fall is surprisingly pluriform. And it is attested only relatively late: none of the readings can be dated earlier than the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD with full certainty.

Different from the Watchers' tradition, concepts of Satan's fall – as we have already seen above – are attested mainly in the Christian sphere, which we will deal with just in passing. We will also leave it unexplained in how far Jewish tradition precedes Christian traditions. Maybe in Justinus a Jewish background has an after-effect, when he relates the sentence ὡς εἴς τῶν ἀρχόντων πίπτετε (Ps 81:7 LXX) in Dialogus cum Tryphone (124:3) to "that so called serpent" (τοῦ κεκλημένου ὄφεως) "which had a great fall, because it seduced Eve" (πεσόντος πτώσιν μεγάλην διὰ τὸ ἀποπλανῆσαι τὴν Εὔαν); for this there are to be found Jewish parallels – though they clearly follow a different tendency – in Abôth de Rabbi Nathan (ARN; Schechter, 164) and in Midrash Tehillim on Ps 82:7. Jewish influence is shown directly or indirectly in any passage where the tradition originally coming from the Jewish Vita Adae et Evaë seems to be adopted, namely that Satan fell because he refused to perform proskynesis before Adam (Vit Ad 11-17); it produced enormous consequences in Coptic literature, as I will show in a separate article. Maybe one might postulate a Jewish influence also with regard to the onomastic tradition which at least employs Hebrew or Aramaic linguistic material. It often associates the name "Satan" with "apostasy" and hence probably alludes to a fall of angels, cf. e.g. Justinus Dial. 103:5, who explains Σατανᾶς as a composite made up of σατᾶ (= ἀποστάτης) and νᾶς (= ὄφεις)<sup>15</sup> and the Onomasticum Vaticanum<sup>16</sup>: Σατάν

15 Here an etymology is intended with the word שָׁׂרֵן, "serpent", which is only attested in Hebrew, and the verb הַשֵּׁב / הַשֵּׁב (Hebrew / Middle Hebrew) viz. הַשֵּׁב / אַשְׁבֵּן / אַשְׁבֵּן (Aramaic); its basic meaning refers to an (intentional) leaving of the path, cf. Köhler / Baumgartner, Lexikon 1227a and Dalman, Handwörterbuch 283. This etymology may indeed be proved in Aramaic, cf. Caverna Thesaurorum 3:6 (Ri, 22-23), where the Satan's name שָׁׂרֵן is derived from שָׁׂרֵן ("go astray"); Cf. Brockelmann, Lexicon 467.

16 de Lagarde, Onomastica 176. Numbers of pages and lines according to the first edition; they are printed in the margin in the second edition. For the onomastic traditions in the early church cf. Wutz, Onomastica.

ἀντικείμενος ἢ ἀποστάτης<sup>17</sup> and similar Quaestiones Bartholomaei 4:25 where Σατανᾶς is translated ἔξαγγελος θεοῦ.

### 3.2. Spuria in Jewish Tradition

But what about concretely nameable Jewish references? Again we are confronted with material that can hardly be considered as secure, partly because the references are derived from Jewish writings with a Christian superstratum, partly because they show only a vague idea of Satan's fall. Such an example is found in 2 En 31:3-6: whatsoever this text once wanted to say (in its present state of being it is hardly understandable) it seems as though it hints at a primeval rivalry between Satan and man concerning power; thus it seems to be akin to the narrative of Satan's fall in Vita Adae et Evae we are going to discuss. Nevertheless, it is not quite sure whether the text originally mentioned a fall of Satan; Bötttrich<sup>18</sup> thinks that the remarks in 2En 31:4-5 about Satan as a former angel and about the change of his name from Satanail into Satan that went with the loss of his angelic nature is secondary.

Also uncertain is 3Bar 4:8 where the vine is identified with the tree, through which Adam was seduced: this had been planted by Samael, whom God had cursed; that is why God had forbidden Adam to eat of it. When the passage talks about a cursing of Samael, this could be a hint at a fall of Satan; but we do not come to know anything precisely<sup>19</sup>.

In Rabbinic literature we find at best reflections of traditions of a protological fall of Satan: The passage in Abô de Rabbi Nâtân (ARN)<sup>20</sup>, which strongly recalls the Testament of Job, relates the sentence "and like one of the princes you fall" to Satan's fall during the fight with Job (cf. Test Ijob 27); here the interpretation of the verse found in Justinus might have an after-effect. Perhaps this also applies to Midrash Tehillim on Ps 82:7, which takes the respective sentence as referring to Isa 24:21 which talks about the "disaster of the high host in the height" by God<sup>21</sup>. Whether this passage is considering a primeval fall of angels

17 For the Quaestiones Bartholomaei cf. Bonwetsch , Fragen.

18 Henochbuch 929, note 4a.

19 For 3Bar cf. Brock, *Testamentum / Picard, Apocalypsis* 61-96. That the tree in the centre of the garden was a vine, is also said in BerR 15,3; *Pirqê de Rabbi Eliezer* 23 and elsewhere, cf. Ginzberg, *Haggada*, especially 43 (1899), 122-125.

20 Cf. Schechter, *Aboth* 164. The respective passage is Sondergut of one of the two recensions of ARN, namely of recension A. Cf. Stemberger, *Einleitung* 224-226.

21 Cf. שְׁרֵד מִזְבֵּחַ 498.

must remain undecided, though. The referential passage in Isa 24:21 at least is not protological in nature.

### 3.3 Vita Adae et Evaе 11-17

On the whole it seems that the primeval fall of Satan actually hardly concerned early Judaism – in contrast to Christianity in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. However, we have already collected several passages which indicate – in spite of their vagueness – that such a subject existed in early Judaism. Above all there is a text which really testifies substantially to respective satanological speculations in early Judaism: the story of Satan's fall in Vita Adae et Evaе (VitAd) 11-17 to which we already referred several times<sup>22</sup>. It narrates how Adam learns (after Eve has been seduced by Satan a second time – VitAd 9-10) from Satan why he, Satan, fights against him and his wife so fiercely. Satan tells Adam that he is acting in such a hostile way against them because for Adam's sake he lost his doxa, his nearness to God, his heavenly dwellings and the community with angels and was thrown down to earth (VitAd 11-12). The occasion when this occurred was the moment when Adam was created (VitAd 13): When God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, so that he became God's image, Michael first made Adam perform the proskynesis before God (13:2). After Michael himself had set a good example he asked the angels to perform the proskynesis before Adam as God's image (14:1). This is indeed the order that was directed to the angels; the vocabulary describing what Adam does with regard to God is the same in the different versions of the story as with the action that is demanded from the angels with regard to Adam: In VitAd (Latin) it says in both cases *adorare* ("adore"), in the Armenian parallel *erkir paganel* ("to fall to the ground")<sup>23</sup>; the basic Greek term will be προσκυνεῖν<sup>24</sup>. Satan is not pleased by Michael's demand. He refuses, giv-

22 The Vit Ad derives from the ApocMos, which originated in Palestinian Judaism in the first or second century AD (cf. Dochhorn, Apokalypse 149-172). Shortly after the ApocMos the Vit Ad was written in the very milieu that also composed the ApocMos (cf. Dochhorn, Apokalypse 138-145). Like Vit Ad as a whole, Vit Ad 11-17 exists in three versions (Latin, Armenian, and Georgian. For a synopse cf. Anderson / Stone, Synopsis 9-13; concerning the versions of Vit Ad, designated Vit Ad (lat), Vit Ad (arm), and Vit Ad (georg), cf. Dochhorn, Apokalypse 39-60, where also some Coptic fragments are presented.

23 For Vit Ad (arm) cf. Stone, Penitence (CSCO 429); Stone, Penitence (CSCO 430).

24 Cf. the secondary tradition in ApcSedrach 5:2; Didascalia Christi 23; Quaestiones Bartholomaei 4:54, which has the lexeae προσκυνεῖν. For Apc Sedrach cf. Wahl,

ing the following reason: he was created prior to Adam and therefore Adam owes the proskynesis to him, not he to Adam. The angels attributed to Satan join in his refusal (VitAd 15). Consequently God is angry with Satan and his angels and has them expelled from heaven to earth. When he has arrived on earth and after he has recognized the loss of his glory, Satan envies Adam his dwelling in Paradise and sees to it that Adam is expelled from Paradise by means of his wife as Satan had been expelled before (VitAd 16). This is Satan's story, and after Adam has listened to it, he first commends his life to God (cf. Ps 31:6); afterwards he prays to God that he will remove this fiend from his sight and might give Satan's lost glory to him. Satan has vanished immediately after this (VitAd 17).

This is not the place to prove the Jewish character of this narrative in detail; occasionally one has ascribed a "heterodox" viz. "Gnostic" background to it<sup>25</sup>. Here it may suffice to say that it may be regarded as a genuine part of the essentially Jewish VitAd. It belongs to the first chapters (VitAd 1-21) which are a surplus with regard to ApocMos from which Vit Ad is derived, but which are basically composed like the narratives of ApocMos<sup>26</sup>: All layers of ApocMos and the *Sondergut* of VitAd develope narratives about Adam and Eve by means of exegetical observations concerning the biblical text (mainly Gen 3); in all layers including the *Sondergut* of VitAd the book of Jubilees is another referential text, in the later layers of ApocMos and in the *Sondergut* of VitAd also the narrative of Eve about the regrettable occurrences in Paradise (ApocMos 15-30, a retelling of Gen 3 which forms the nucleus of ApocMos) serves as a reference text. What is true for the initial chapters of VitAd in general is also true for the story of Satan's fall<sup>27</sup>: As will be seen, it is based on exegetical observations, takes note of the book of Jubilees and may be understood as a further development of narrative ideas taken from ApocMos 15-30. Thus it originates in the milieu of ApocMos and VitAd. Now, what are the theological and narrative central ideas of this story which appears as a little peculiar at first glance? On the whole four central aspects are to be found:

1. As a Biblical starting point the creation of man, which is here defined as the creation of Adam exclusively (cf. 1Kor 11:7; 1Tim 2:13), as God's image, may be determined. Adam's creation as God's image is here understood in the sense that it occurred the very moment when

Apocalypsis, for Didascalia Christi Nau, Didascalie 225-254, for Quaestiones Bartholomaei cf. note 17.

25 Cf Merk / Meiser, Leben 766-767 (bibliography).

26 Cf. Dochhorn, Apokalypse 138-145.

27 Cf. Dochhorn, Apokalypse 143-144.

God breathed the breath of life into Adam's nostrils; Gen 1:27 and 2:7 are associated to one another by combined reading. The idea constitutive for VitAd 11-17 consists in the fact that Adam being created as God's image is interpreted in terms of Gen 1:26, that is as a title implying authority: according to Gen 1:26 Adam will be created as God's image in order to make him ruler of the animals; in analogy he is honoured by the proskynesis, which is, however, not performed by the animals, but by the angels.

That the title "God's image" is to be taken as the reason for Adam's claim to the angels' proskynesis is expressed in the narrative among other things by the feature that first Adam prostrates himself before God, before Michael asks the angels to prostrate themselves before Adam, God's image. This makes it clear that the angels' proskynesis before Adam is derivative in nature: Its archetype is the proskynesis before God corresponding to the fact that God himself is the archetype of his image, Adam. One may not overlook this trait when dealing with the problem whether VitAd 11-17 is to be regarded as a product of basically monotheistic Judaism. In Jewish milieu authority that is derived from God may obviously receive honours which are analogues to honours offered to God. This is also shown, for instance, in Heb 1 where it says that Christ after his *sessio ad dexteram* receives the angels' proskynesis (Heb 1:6; cf. 1:3). 3En 14 (a text, of course, dated later), where Metatron = Enoch accepts the angels' proskynesis, also shows a corresponding tendency.

2. A special characteristic which distinguishes VitAd 11-17 from Gen 1:26, is the fact that the claim of authority connected with the title "God's image" is related to the angels; in Gen 1:26 it was related to the animals. The *dominium bestiarum* thus became a *dominium angelorum*. That VitAd is interested in just this transformation may be seen when one considers the close relation between VitAd 11-17 and VitAd 44 (16), which is about Satan seducing the serpent to help him with the plot he has planned against Adam and Eve. In VitAd 44 (16) Satan mentions a daily proskynesis performed by the animals before Adam; then he tries to explain the absurdity of this action, namely by arguing that the serpent was created prior to Adam. We are familiar with this argument from the narrative of Satan's fall as well; doubtless VitAd will have both texts related to one another. So for the reader it is clear that *dominium bestiarum* and *dominium angelorum* belong together. If we presuppose that there are no superior beings beyond God apart from men and angels, then this depicts a primeval world order, where Adam is in the top position immediately following God.

The idea of Adam's top position within the cosmos in primeval times has numerous analogies in early Jewish and early Christian literature. This is true with regard to the repeatedly attested concept of the superiority of the righteous to the angels,<sup>28</sup> which probably also is the basis of TestAbr: there the Archangel Michael did not succeed when he had to demand Abraham's soul from Abraham (TestAbr 4:5ff. cf. ApocEsdrae 6:3-15). A cognate idea is also shown in traditions dealing with authority of the righteous exerted on animals and evil spirits.<sup>29</sup> Here again men act as rulers. Such an authority becomes especially evident within the story of Seth's journey through Paradise in ApocMos 9-13, where Seth – who is also called "man of God" in the narrative (ApocMos 13:2) – puts an animal attacking him in its place by referring to his own status of being God's image (ApocMos 12). A similar way of hierarchical thinking may become manifest also in the New Testament. A significant example is found in 1Cor 3:22-23 where the addressees are presented in such a way that they are owners of everything – Paul, Apollos and Cephas as well as cosmic actualities like life and death, present and future, while they themselves belong to Christ, who belongs to God. This text is related to Vit Ad 11-17 by two aspects, namely the idea of man's cosmic superiority on the one hand and the fact that this cosmic superiority seems to be connected with being subordinated to God (viz. Christ), on the other hand. Hierarchical thinking reminding of VitAd 11-17 is also found in Heb 1, where Christ receives the angels' proskynesis (Heb 1:6). As in VitAd 11-17 it is again an individual person to whom the respective authoritative position is attributed. This person, however, represents a community, namely the Christians. It fits in with this that Heb says with regard to those who are to inherit salvation, that is the Christians, that the angels fulfil the function of servants (Heb 1:14). Probably Adam is also a figure who may in principle represent a community, although VitAd talks about Adam and Eve (and Seth) rather as individuals than as prototypes or representatives of mankind<sup>30</sup>. Other individual characters whose authoritative position recalls VitAd 11-17 are Enoch/ Metatron (3En 14) and Moses, when the latter is dreaming that he may take a seat on God's

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28 Cf. ApcEsdrae 1:9; Narratio Zosimi (gr) 20,2-6.

29 Cf. TestIssachar 7:7; Test Naphthali 8:4; TestBenjamin 5:2; bBer 33a; Act 28:3-6. – For the dominion of the righteous regarding the animals cf. Dochhorn, Paulus 207-208.

30 The narrative about the wild animal attacking Seth (ApcMos 10-12) is a characteristic example for the fact that the protagonists of ApcMos viz. VitAd are rather individuals than types: the curse in Gen 3:15 is related to Eve and Seth. A little later, however, Adam reproaches Eve with having brought death upon "us" and "all our offspring"; this is the perspective of all mankind as the existentialia concerning men after the expulsion from Paradise do not only concern Adam and Eve.

throne and receive the stars' proskynesis (Ezechiel tragicus in Eusebius, Praeparatio Evangelica ix 29.5).

3. Satan does not accept Adam's *dominium angelorum* by arguing that he, Satan, was created prior to Adam. This argument has recourse to the knowledge of the angels' creation. Since the book of Jubilees, as proved above, functioned as referential text in the milieu where has been ApocMos above and VitAd were written, LibJub 2:2 will most probably be in the background as it says that the angels were created the first day of creation. In order to find out what is meant by this argument it may not be overlooked that it is also used by Satan in another passage within VitAd: in VitAd 44 (16) he says to the serpent that it need not perform the proskynesis before Adam, because he is younger than the serpent. Concludingly, indicating Adam's posteriority not only casts doubt upon the *dominium angelorum*, but on the *dominium bestiarum* as well. Indeed, one might ask – with Gen 1 in view – why man viz. Adam as the last one created should be the ruler. Rabbinic literature ,has indeed, thought about this problem associated with man's posteriority within creation<sup>31</sup>. In this context the angels are mentioned, too: 'If Adam is worthy, they say to him: 'You are superior to the servant-angels.', and if not, then they say to him: 'The fly was there before you, the mosquito was there before you, this rainworm was there before you.'"

4. When Satan refuses to perform the proskynesis and even demands the contrary, namely that rather Adam must perform the proskynesis before him, then he appears as a rival with regard to power and thus as Adam's opponent. This aspect has to be noticed, because in research on Satan there prevails a tendency to regard him primarily as an opponent of God<sup>32</sup>. But Satan does not turn against God in the narrative of Satan's fall. Even the claim that Adam should perform the proskynesis before him, is not perceptibly to be understood in this way; this would cast the shadow of being something illegitimate on the angels' proskynesis before Adam. Only later a reference to Isa 14:12ff. entered parts of the tradition of VitAd (lat) 15; in Christian literature since Origenes this biblical text was interpreted in such a way that here a primeval arrogance of Satan to claim to be God's equal was shown. By this interpretation emerged the version of the text which

31 Cf. Ber R 8:1 var (Theodor/ Albeck, Bereschit 56,6 App).

32 An example for this view is found in von Rad διάβολος 71-74, especially 74,9ff. To Satan in early Judaism he ascribes a nearly complete absolutization in relation to God; as a reason for this he assumes the development of a dualistic world concept influenced from Iranic ideas. Similar information is found in Breytenbach / Day, Satan 1370, and Nielsen, 137, 745-751, especially 749.

formed the basis of the *editio prima* of VitAd (lat) by Meyer; as this edition was regarded nearly unanimously as identical with VitAd<sup>33</sup>, the recourse on Isa 14:12ff. was taken as a constituent of the narrative about Satan's fall and the latter was even taken as a midrash on Isa 14:12ff.<sup>34</sup> But this is inadequate: VitAd is not about Satan's rebellion against God or even a dualism between God and Satan, but rather about a contrast between Satan and Adam who are rivals with regard to one and the same powerful position.

Such a satanology is not uncharacteristic for VitAd and ApocMos on which it is based. ApocMos already knows Satan as man's enemy (cf. the title ἐχθρός in ApocMos 2:4; 7:2; 15:1). It is also familiar with rivalry between Adam and Satan with regard to power: in ApocMos 39 God promises to Adam who is lying dead on the ground that the joy of those who have brought him down to this will turn into sorrow, and vice versa will his sorrow be changed into joy; he will take a seat on the throne of the one who has deceived him (ApocMos 39:3). Obviously only one at a time may rejoice here, and the one supplants the other. Between Satan and man there is a substitutionary relation. Also in ApocMos 16 aspects of such a substitutionary relation may be found: there Satan says to the serpent: "Let us see to it that Adam will be expelled from Paradise as we have been expelled for his sake." (16:3). Again: the one's misfortune is related to the other's fortune.

The motif of the rivalry between Adam and Satan seems to be characteristic of the earlier traditions of Satan's fall in general. We have already found it in 2En 31. It is also found in earlier Christian traditions of Satan's fall<sup>35</sup>. In these Christian traditions it is throughout connected with the motif of Satan's envy which is closely associated with the idea of rivalry for power. Satan's envy is attested in the Jewish context in SapSal 2:23-24: It talks about Satan's envy of man as God's image; the idea that man is God's image is interpreted here not with regard to a powerful position of man, but rather with regard to his immortality.

33 Cf. Meyer, Vita 185-250. On the whole Meyer's text corresponds to the southern German recension of VitAd (lat); for this cf. Petorelli, Vie 5-104, especially 41-67. That the text of VitAd (lat) must have read considerably different from the one attested in VitAd (lat/ sd) indicates Codex Paris, BNF, lat 3832, which offers an extremely differing text closer to the Armenian and Georgian versions. These two versions became known only later, cf. Dochhorn, Apokalypse 39-41. VitAd (lat/ p) as well as VitAd (arm.georg) do not include a recourse on Isa 14:12ff in VitAd 15.

34 Cf. Fuchs, Leben 506-528, especially 513 note c.

35 Cf. Irenäus, Adversus Haereses V,24,4; Demonstratio 16; Tertullian, De Patientia 5,5-7 (CCSL 1,303); Cyprian, De Zelo 4 (CCSL 3A,76-77). Cf. Stieren, Sancti Irenaei 783. and ter Merkerttschian / Wilson, ἀπόδεξιν.

SapSal 2:23-24 is no narrative about Satan's fall, but it generated such narratives<sup>36</sup>.

We will retain – both religion-historically and theologically – an extremely relevant trait of the narrative of Satan's fall in VitAd 11-17, namely that it does not primarily deal with a conflict between Satan and God, but with a conflict between Satan and man. This aspect returns in the Christian tradition of Satan's fall (cf. Cyprian and Tertullian), but gradually Satan's aggression against God becomes more and more prevailing<sup>37</sup>. This becomes especially clear in the story of Lucifer mentioned in ch. 1.

An important result of the above short exegesis of the narrative of Satan's fall in VitAd 11-17 will be that it is indeed conceivable as originating in a Jewish milieu: relations with other Jewish (and Christian) traditions and theologoumena are both numerous and relevant. With regard to its position in religion-history the story appears to be quite conjunctive. Correspondingly it obtained – at least in the beginning – a considerable response – primarily, however, in Christian traditions.<sup>38</sup>

Although VitAd 11-17 is to be taken as originating in early Judaism, it cannot be denied that it was not successful in Jewish tradition literature which followed after it. This is the more striking as the traditions of ApocMos and especially of VitAd were still adopted by the rabbis<sup>39</sup>. Probably it was rejected; this is proved by the fact that in BerR 8:10<sup>40</sup> we find a tradition that can be interpreted as a parody of this narrative: When God had created Adam, the angels wanted to speak a Qādōš before Adam. At this moment God caused a sleep to fall upon Adam (the creation of the woman! – Gen 2:21). Here God's prerogative for being worshipped is emphasized, namely against Adam; that a confrontation with VitAd 11-17 was intended seems probable. It may also be considered that VitAd 11-17 did not meet with approval because for the rabbis the motif of Satan's fall was a matter kept in the background. The few occurrences we dealt with before looking at VitAd 11-17, which remain obscure, do not alter the fact.

36 Tatian, *Oratio ad Graecos* 7 (Goodspeed, *Apologeten* 273-274) und Cyprian, *De Zelo* 4 (CCSL 3A, 76-77).

37 Already in Irenaeus, *adv. Haer.* IV 25:4, where Satan still primarily functions as a rival of man, with regard to God Satan is compared to an apostate who tries to win over the inhabitants of a region against the legitimate ruler. Probably this parables alludes to the seducing of Adam and Eve; the passage is somewhat obscure.

38 Cf. Dochhorn, *Apokalypse* 52-54 (n. 39).

39 Cf. Vit Ad 1-6.20 [lat: 22] [Adam in search of food and repenting] // Ber R 20,10; Vit Ad 18-21 // Apc Mos 25 // Ber R 20,7; Apc Mos 40,3-5 // Ber R 22,9 and Dochhorn, *Apokalypse* 140-141; 144; 406-407; 537-538.

40 Cf. Theodor / Albeck, *Bereschit* 63-64.

### 3.4. Pirqê de Rabbi Eliézer

However, this must not give rise to the impression that classical Judaism remained intransigent with regard to the motif of Satan's fall. Judaism nevertheless produced a great tradition of Satan's fall in spite of this. It is to be found in the *Pirqê de Rabbi Eliézer* (PRE)<sup>41</sup> which will originate in the 9<sup>th</sup> century<sup>42</sup>. The Book Bahir then adopted it<sup>43</sup>. According to this tradition Samael who is riding on the serpent and on a camel, seduces the first two humans (PRE 13) after the servant-angels (*מלאכי השראת*) have considered how Adam might be lead into committing sin against his creator. Samael is punished by being expelled from heaven (PRE 14). PRE 27 tells how Samael when he was thrown out of heaven, tried to seize Michael by his wings in order to drag him along. The servant-angels are mentioned neither in the course of the intrigue against Adam and Eve nor when the two are punished.

PRE seem to associate a tradition of Satan's fall continuing Gen 3 with a characteristically rabbinic motif, namely the rivalry between angels and men. But this tradition on Satan's fall will have been independent once as the servant-angels' relationship to Samael's activity and suffering appears a little unclear (the servant-angels disappear from the narrative!). That the serpent was shaped like a camel is already to be found in BerR 19:1<sup>44</sup>. But even if one assumes that tradition was adopted in PRE one will not succeed in going back to the earliest times. And rather something else is important, namely the surprisingly conservative (as compared with the development in Christianity) trait of the narrative: Whereas in Christianity – especially by the legend of Lucifer – an opposition between God and his apostate, Satan, becomes more and more prominent, in Judaism there still is, as in VitAd 11-17, a competitive rivalry between Satan and man. Jewish satanology, if it knows about a primeval fall of Satan at all, remains true to itself in that it regards this fall more as an affair of anthropology than of theology.

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41 Cf. Börner-Klein, *Pirke*.

42 Cf. Stemberger, *Einleitung* 321-323.

43 Cf. Scholem, *Buch*.

44 Cf. Theodor/ Albeck, *Bereschit* 171. Cf. also the traditions concerning the former shape of the serpent in *Abôt de Rabbi Nâtan I* (Schechter, *Aboth* 3).

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BAC: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos  
 CCSL: Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina  
 CSCO: Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium  
 CSEL: Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum  
 MPG: Patrologia Graeca, collegit Migne  
 MPL: Patrologia Latina, collegit Migne  
 PTS: Patristische Texte und Studien

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VI.

